

REMARKS

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office action dated December 28, 2006. In the Office action, claims 1–7, 18–23, 34–36, and 42–45 have been rejected, and claims 8–17, 24–33, 37–41, and 46–51 have been objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. The above amendments are intended to put the application in condition for allowance by cancelling the rejected claims or amending them to include allowed subject matter. With entry of the above amendments, claims 8–17, 24–36, 38–41 and 46–51 remain in the application. In view of the amendments above, and the remarks below, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and allowance of the remaining claims.

Cancellation of Claims

Claims 1–7, 18–23, 37, 42–45 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 8–17, 24–33, 37–41, and 46–51 recite allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants agree with the Examiner's conclusions regarding the patentability of the allowed claims, without necessarily agreeing with or acquiescing in the Examiner's reasoning. In particular, applicants believe that the claims are allowable because the prior art fails to teach or suggest the invention as claimed, independent of how the invention is paraphrased.

In the amendments above, claim 8 has been amended to include the limitations of claims 1 and 4–7 from which it depended, claim 13 has been amended to include the limitations of claims 1 and 2 from which it depended, claim 24 has been amended to include the limitations of claims 19–23 from which it depended, and claim 29 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 19. Claims 8, 13, 24 and 29 are each written in independent form. Additionally, claims 25 and 28 have been amended to provide consistency in terminology between the claims.

Because claims 8, 13, 24, and 29 have been indicated to recite allowable subject matter, these claims are now allowable. Accordingly, claims 9–12, which depend variously from claim 8, claims 14–17, which depend variously from claim 13, claims 25–28 and 46, which depend variously from claim 24, and claims 30–33 and 47–48, which depend variously from claim 29, are allowable for at least these same reasons.

Similarly, claim 34 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 37, which claim previously depended from claim 34. Because claim 37 was indicated to recite allowable subject matter, claim 34 is now allowable. Claims 38, 49, and 51, which previously depended from claim 37, have been amended to depend from claim 34. Claim 36, which previously depended from claim 34, has been amended to depend from claim 35 for consistency in terminology. Accordingly, claims 35–41 and 49–51, which depend variously from claim 34, are allowable for at least these same reasons.

Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims.

Applicants believe no fees are now due. Please charge any additional fees required, or credit any overpayments, to our Deposit Account No. 11-1540. If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

**CERTIFICATE OF ELECTRONIC
SUBMISSION**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being submitted electronically via the United States Patent & Trademark Office EFS-Web system on March 27, 2007.

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Respectfully submitted,

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